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Caesar's army. In 46 B.C. during Caesar's celebration of his triumphs the soldiers in the songs they chanted as they marched along in the procession sang of their diet of *lapsana* at Dyrrachium.

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ATHENA AND THE ADVENTURES OF ODYSSEUS

In the *Iliad*, Athena regularly attends her favorites in their *aristeia*, and in the *Odyssey* she is constantly at the side of Telemachus and Penelope, and of Odysseus after he reaches the isles of the Phaeacians. But from the adventures, which he describes to Alcinoüs in Books ix-xii, she is absent. Apparently the hero does not even invoke her aid until he is nearing the coast of Scheria (although ι 317 hints at a petition for help), and we do not learn of this prayer until Odysseus reaches her sacred grove. The poet felt the need of explaining her absence: she feared the wrath of Poseidon. This reason may have satisfied Odysseus, but it is not sufficient for us. It is true that Odysseus had angered Poseidon (ι 525) for which he must be punished. But this was not enough to have kept Athena from rendering him any assistance whatsoever. In a parallel case Aias, who had aroused the wrath of Athena, was saved by Poseidon in the first instance (δ 502). Besides, the anger of the Earthshaker was not effective until Odysseus had left the land of the Cyclopes. Before that the hero must have called upon his patron divinity many times—in the fight with the Ciconians, in the storm off Cape Malea, and in the despair of the first night in the cave of Polyphemus. We must look elsewhere, I think, for the true explanation.

Homer, like the tragic poet, focuses our attention upon the action of the poem. If we knew that Athena had assisted Odysseus during his wanderings (and it would have been hard for her to have refused him all help if he had asked for it repeatedly), we should wonder why she had taken no interest in the affairs of Ithaca during the ten years which precede the action. We gain the impression that she has neither watched over Telemachus, nor comforted Laertes, nor kept Anticlea from grieving to death because of the absence of her son. She suggested to Penelope the contest of the bow; yet, although she is the goddess of spinning and weaving, she did not, so far as the poet lets us know, inspire the stratagem of the web: the Suitors give Penelope the credit for the trick, and the queen herself says it was "heaven" that put it into her heart. The truth is that the poet's manner requires him to keep Athena out of the story until the opening of the poem, and to be consistent he must not permit her to help Odysseus on his wanderings. The gain from this is considerable. The adventures are more thrilling than if Odysseus were under the constant protection of Athena, as Telemachus is on his journey. We are filled with greater admiration for the hero's craft, which, as is implied at the

very beginning of the Apologue (l. 19), is one of the themes of that narrative. Moreover, since Athena is constantly in view in Books i-iv and xiii-xxiv, the poet secures variety by leaving her out of the Apologue, and by introducing in her place Hermes and Leucothea as "gods of the machine," and Circe and the shades of Tiresias and Agamemnon to give Odysseus the information which is important both for him and for the hearer.

It is not enough, therefore, to say (with Jörgensen) that the absence of Athena from the adventures indicates—as it undoubtedly does indicate—that Books ix-xii were never composed in the third person; we must add that it increases the interest of the hearer and heightens the effect of the tale, and that the desirability of keeping Athena out of the adventures strengthens the reason for putting the narrative into the mouth of the hero,¹ a device by which the poet gained a unity of time similar to that of the *Iliad*, and gained it in a more plausible manner.

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¹ When the *poet* tells the story he repeatedly introduces an episode by the phrase: "For the goddess put it into his (or her) heart."